



ST. MARY MAGDALEN.

[Guido Reni.]



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## "The Wizard's Knot."

An English Cabinet Minister—we forget his name, but we think he was "the Last of the Chief Secretaries," a "sympathetic" creature—declared some years ago in the British House of Commons that "Minorities must suffer: it is the badge of all their tribe." The minority in question at that day happened to be largely a Catholic minority. So the wise and witty sentiment was greeted with "laughter and cheers." It was the motto of the top dog, and the wit and humour of the top dog are generally keenly appreciated even in such a solemn deliberative assembly as the British House of Commons.

Times have changed. It is a question to-day of arranging amicably—through the highest and purest international motives—a decent measure of self-

government for Ireland, a Catholic country with a comparatively small Protestant minority. One would think that the same motto held good, even if suffering were inevitable where it is not even possible. "Safeguards" bristle like bayonets around and throughout the famous "Act for the Better Government of Ireland," which has been so long, like the remnant of our Penal Laws (only recently brought into fresh operation), on "the Statute Book." Even the Irish Freemasons are "safeguarded" by that precious Act from the oppression of their Catholic fellow-countrymen without whose patronage they would have long since starved in most parts of Ireland.

But the motto "Minorities must suffer" applies, of course, only to Catholic minorities. In Ireland, "Majorities (being Catholic) must suffer"—as in France, for example! The Protestant minority must be saved even from the very shadow of possible inconvenience. Besides, the Protestant minority, transplanted from Britain to leaven the Irish Papist mass, has been so long in the ascendant that one shudders to think of the disaster that anything like equality of treatment might bring to the superior race. Let us, by all means, be generous and give Home Rule to the Distressful Country—but it is "unthinkable that [four counties of] Ulster should be coerced" or that potential traitors should be driven to extremes. Coercion is not at all unthinkable for the rest of Ireland: it has been the centuries old badge of the Irish Papist majority, and there are ways and means of bringing potency into act there and ending it by honest bullets.

So the "Little Wizard of Wales" is appointed to the willing task of bamboozling a naturally stupid race, still further stupefied by Catholicism and bondage. The Pale is his model—so loved of Irishmen. And nothing simpler, surely, than to set up a new Pale with the "Athens of the North" as capital, and the true believers petted and pampered under a special Executive within—a large Catholic minority also within, but that is a mere detail ("Suffering is the badge of all their tribe")—and the "mere Irish" without, struggling to exist under a maimed and truncated "Home Rule." One has some little experience of the almost too generous treatment of the Protestant minority south of the Boyne, and how they fatten on it—but imagination shudders at the thought of how the Catholics would fare in the new Kingdom of Ulster. Experience is of some value in that respect too, and its lessons are not so old as to be forgotten.

The whole question in Ireland is to a large extent one of religion. We all know that if we had been of the religion of the Boers we could have had our freedom long ago. But, as that Cabinet Minister above quoted said recently: "You can never account for the Roman Catholic Church." You cannot. The Roman Catholic Church in Ulster, as represented by its Bishops, has actually spurned the snare laid for it. Following the views of His Eminence Cardinal Logue, their Lordships have declared their conviction that "it would be infinitely better to remain as we are, for fifty years to come, under English rule, than to accept these proposals"—of the aforesaid Wizard. And the Bishop of Derry, in making public their decision, puts his finger on the reason of this hurried scheme of large and generous statesmanship: "Lloyd George's proposals seem to have been made for the purpose, on the one hand, of conciliating the opinion of neutral countries, and especially American opinion, and, on the other hand, of removing the obstacle of Ireland's position, which stands as a barrier in the way of England's claim to speak in defence of the rights of small nations when the affairs of Europe must be settled at the end of the war."

Well, we have no need to conciliate any outside opinion—and least of all to hurry. We have waited, more or less patiently, for seven centuries and a half. And the settlement day for the small nations may come sooner than most people expect. We can wait.

## "Those Ills We Have."

THOSE who have read the works of F. Marion Crawford will, no doubt, remember that creation of the novelist's, Marzio Pandolfi, in what many regard as the best work that came from his pen. He depicts for us Marzio, the unbeliever, the soured one, whose great grievance all through life is the successful opposition—unintentional as it was—of his clerical brother. He shows us Marzio's household listening with attention to the opinions of the clergyman, because the latter talked reason tempered with a sane outlook on the matters of the world. And the unbeliever's hatred of his brother grew till he had resolved on a plan of getting rid of what he deemed the greatest ill in his life. "To get Paolo into the workshop alone—a blow—the concealment of the dead body—it was all simple enough." There was even a cellar under the sculptor's workshop, into which nobody ever went. . . .

The novelist works to this stage bit by bit, showing us how the misguided man came to his terrible resolve with a sense that he was the most sinned-against being in the world. Look at the warped Marzio, as he worked putting the final touches to a silver crucifix, pondering over his awful resolution:

"Once he rose from his stool, and going to the corner, dragged away the iron-bound safe from its place. A rusty ring lay flat in a little hollow in the surface of the trap-door. Marzio bent over it with a pale face and gleaming eyes. It seemed to him as though, if he looked round, he should see Paolo's body lying on the floor, ready to be dropped into the space below. He raised the wood and set the trap back against the wall, peering down into the black depths. A damp smell came up to his nostrils from the moist staircase. He struck a match, and held it into the opening, to see in what direction the stairs led down. . . .

"Then with a little thud the cross at which he had been working fell on to a pad, for Marzio had insecurely fixed it before he got up to examine the trap-door. "With a short cry of horror he sprang back from the opening and looked around. It was as though the dead body of the murdered man had stirred upon the floor. . . ."

There follows a picture of how the man's overstrained imagination terrifies him, bringing the cold perspiration to his forehead. And at that same moment the priest chances to call to inspect some work which is being carried out at the church near by. A falling ladder, a plucky attempt to save a workman from injury, with the result that the clergyman saves the workman at his own expense, and is carried more dead than alive to Marzio's house. In the meantime, the sculptor has gone through mazes of thought, has decided that

he is more than glad he did not succeed in one attempt he was on the verge of making on his brother's life. And, full of a vague dread, full of thankfulness that the fear of the consequences had restrained him from violence, he came and saw his brother's mangled body in his own bedroom. . . .

I have referred at length to this portrayal of the workings of the mind which plans to rid itself from what it believes a grievance, because to my mind it is the finest demonstration of the theory that a supposed ill can only be supplanted by a greater ill than pen of writer has ever given forth. And, coming from a Catholic author, this showing that a crime-stained departure from any fancied or real grievance can but lead the individual into depths of misery ten times more unbearable than the original irksomeness has a simple force which drives home conviction as a skilful carpenter drives and clinches nails.

The desire to escape from present ills is always there, only the magnitude both of the wish and the evils themselves varies. We are all spirits in revolt against the present order of things—we plume ourselves as much as to say: "Now, if only I had the arrangement of these matters I'd have done so and so. Don't you think that would have been ever so much better?" And, our cry is that our opportunities have always been too few, our handicaps time after time so heavy that we've never had a fair chance.

The age of delusions is not gone. Those of us that are square pegs seem never able to get away from the notion that we would do much better than our neighbour in the round hole. We do not see the evils that beset the paths of others, so that sometimes when we see them travel warily we are inclined to fancy they are wasting opportunity when they may in reality be but obeying the sanest dictates of prudence. The enchantment-lending effects of distance work out in the direction of leaving us half-blind to the inconveniences of anybody but ourselves—proximity results in our applying a mental magnifying-glass to our own worries. We are all familiar with the plaint which comes as naturally to some as froth comes to the surface of liquor: "Well, now, had any-one ever so much to contend with as I have?"

Looked at in the proper light, it takes a lot more energy to meet trouble half-way than it does to bid a courteous adieu to even the shortest-lingering visitor from the realms of happiness. We can always see the gathering clouds, but we are rarely buoyed with the same optimism of Cowper:

The clouds you so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.

And we must all admit that trials which seemed almost terrible when they concerned ourselves appeared to us as so many molehills of inconsequence when we had a more disinterested view of a fellow-man negotiating their difficulties.

We are simply an enlarged edition of the small boy who denounces the unconcern of others while he is in the clutches of the demon of toothache, but turns an hour later to make a ridicule of somebody else who happens to be making a fuss of a trifling pain in his tooth!

Some incident upsets us, some slight trouble comes our way, and we wonder what we have done to deserve it, we half fancy that we are really most aggrieved beings. It means a rearrangement of all our plans, perhaps, a divergence from our former line of policy. Then, something rather serious happens—something distinctly unpleasant or disagreeable, and think of how our first wonder is that such a trifling happening as the minor one referred to ever cost us a thought at all! If we could only substitute our present ill for it, all the world would smile again. It does smile ultimately, and at last the conviction dawns upon us that trials are only stupefying by reason of the suddenness with which they bear down on us. As one of our philosophers has put it, when the child ceases to wonder at the elephant, he ceases to fear him.

The poets are wonderful people for distributing wisdom to us, their disciples. The would-be cynics tell you never to mind the poets till they practice what they preach, but we, who prefer the placid spirit to the file-like tongue of the carper, just "lie low and say nuffink." A hypocrite could hardly have sung thus:

For every ill beneath the sun,  
There is some remedy or none:  
If there be one, resolve to find it,  
If not, submit, and never mind it.

There is one of the most practical of philosophies, for the simple reason that it is so obvious. The stone wall will not be in the least affected by your head knocking against it—hence, if you be wise, the obvious thing is to save your head. Expect consolation when you come back with a dinged crown to say that you thought the wall was only imitation stone, or that you fancied your head was a great deal harder than it proved to be, and you will discover the blessedness of those who expect not. Go on to say that walls shouldn't be made so hard, and you'll be lucky if somebody only tells you that it's a pity heads were made so soft. Most likely someone will be candid enough to remind you that heads were never made as battering rams.

If you must rail against the ills that are—do it diplomatically. There is no virtue less admired than courage when it does not go hand in hand with judgment. I once heard an old man thus sum up a neighbour who was noted for going full tilt without thought: "He was that class o' a man, he'd fight a bull—but the bull would bate him."

Down the laneway swung a man—a man in a vicious temper. The way was strewn with stones which the man kicked wildly out of his path, swearing the while. He

injured his boots, his toes smarted, and these things did not improve his temper. Near the end of the lane he met a little barefooted girl. He stopped, and swore again. Then he asked her if the stones did not hurt her feet. 'No, mister,' she made answer, 'you see I step between them.' "

That to a large extent sums up our ways of dealing with our trials. If we but exercise caution we can step between a great many of them, but if we lose our tempers and tilt blindly against every object that obstructs our path the chances are very much that we shall be the most injured in the process. In one sense trouble is alike to a hive of bees. Take no notice of it and somehow it gradually seems to desert you—allow yourself to worry and show your annoyance, the result will be that it fastens on to you as do the honey gatherers to anyone displaying flurry or hasty symptoms of retreat.

We Irish have the reputation of taking our troubles philosophically, and though—like our fame as humourists—some of it may not always appear wholly deserved, the ever-present recognition of the Divine ruling at the back of things is a wonderful aid to placid acceptance of the decrees of Fate. Could we but always realise it, such a course is dictated by the sanest canons of common-sense—our share of trouble is invariably lightened to the extent by which we counteract it with a ready recognition of the fact that bad as our case is it might easily have been ten times worse. And we all know the story of the teacher who couldn't punish the mite who came to meet the cane with an outstretched hand and a smile on his face—a very naïve smile, too.

Twist it how you will, you'll just arrive back at the point where you realise that our motto exhorting the calm and cheerful acceptance of troubles is the best one, and the easiest once you know how. If you would rather

Bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of,

do not think you display any lack of courage. It is not because the alternative ills are graver that many people like to risk them—only because they are always hoping against reason that they may be less. With a lucky leap you may get clear from the frying-pan on to the cooler earth—but the chances are about a thousand to one that you'll drop in the fire. And don't forget that the frying-pan is oftener cold than it is hot.

An old man once talked thus to me: "There's two kinds o' trials in this world; the ones that God sends and the ones that people makes for themselves. And there's many the man that's a dale harder on himself than God is."

THOMAS KELLY.

## "Yet So As By Fire,"

BY

LOUISE M. STACKPOOLE KENNY,

AUTHOR OF

"*Jacquetta*," "*The Knight of the Green Shield*," "*Our Own Country*," "*St. Martin of Tours*," etc.

### CHAPTER I.

MORTIMER Vandeleur, of Old Court, East County, was a hard and pitiless man. A man like the Scribes and Pharisees—"binding heavy and insupportable burdens, and lay them on men's shoulders; but with anger of their own they will not move them."

He ground down the poor; he had neither sympathy nor compassion for the wretched peasants, exacting from them the uttermost farthing.

It was the year of Our Lord 1848, and nearly all the broad, cultivated land of green Erin lay under the terrible curse of the potato blight, that failure in the crop of the principal food of the people causing a famine that, like the pestilence of the Middle Ages, devastated the country, and brought starvation, disease and death into many a humble homestead.

Mortimer Vandeleur sat at a luxuriously-spread table in his comfortable dining-room. Big logs burned brightly on the open hearth, and from numberless silver candelabra wax candles diffused a pleasant light. Though the month was December, the table was decorated with exotic flowers, costly glasses and rare china glistened upon the delicate napery, delicious and appetising viands tempted the appetite, and old port and rare madeira in massive cut-glass decanters stood invitingly near the Squire of Old Court.

He was alone, but solitude did not interfere with his pleasure in the sybarite repast, of which he languidly partook—languidly because he wished to prolong the delights of the table.

He slowly sipped the priceless madeira, then held the glass towards the light, the sensual smile of a gastronomic connoisseur flickering sorrow across his dark, stern face.

Abstracted in selfish enjoyment, he did not notice that the butler and footman had left the room. Suddenly he became aware that someone was watching him closely, intently, so intently that the eyes compelled attention. He looked round and saw an old, apparently a very old, woman standing half hidden by the heavy velvet window curtains.

At the same moment a rush of biting air swept through the room.

"Shut that window," he shouted; and as the order was not obeyed he perceived that the flunkeys were no longer in the apartment.

"Where are those accursed knaves?" he stormed. "And who the devil are you?"

The woman came forward, came close to him, and stared straight into his angry countenance; stared without fear, rather with a certain surprised wonder.

She was in dirty, ragged garments, a gaunt, haggard creature. Her lined face had a pitiful expression of acute physical pain, her big eyes glowed in her hollow cheeks like coals of fire, her thin lips were cracked and blistered over wolfish teeth.

She was horribly emaciated, with the appalling, gruesome emaciation of starvation. She looked ninety, but as a matter of fact she was scarce fifty years of age.

"What are you doing here?" thundered the Master of Old Court. She shook her head slowly, and then in a voice of unfeigned surprise said, in musing tones: "Faix it is true—true——"

"In the devil's name, what's true?" he asked, rising and going towards the bell-rope.

She raised a detaining hand, and there was something in her gesture and in her deep-set eyes that gave him pause.

"I would not have believed it," she crooned to herself. "They told me you ate and drank and feasted while we starved—we—your poor people—we whom the Lord gave to you and yours as a sacred charge. I would not believe it of your mother's son. Sure, she was ever the kind lady, kind and sweet to the poor ——"

Her voice broke in her throat, she staggered and caught at the table. The man regarded her from under frowning brows, the allusion to his mother—the only being who had loved him devotedly and unselfishly, the one being who had patiently borne with his ungovernable temper, had constantly though generally ineffectually pleaded with him to show mercy to the weak and suffering—moved him in an unaccountable way.

The woman drew a deep breath, gasped "water" in a thin, scarce audible voice.

Almost unconsciously he handed her his glass half full of the orange-tinted wine.

"No, water," she insisted.

With a slight shrug and raised brows, he poured out some and handed it to her.

She drank it very slowly, then she said with a curious inflection in her cracked voice: "I knew you were not as wicked and heartless as they said—a cup of cold water in His name ——"

She swayed towards him. He supported her, wondering why he did so, and why he did not summon his flunkeys and order them to throw her out. She looked at him, and some-

thing in the dumb gratitude in her deep eyes touched a chord.

"Here, take this," he said gruffly, helping her to a pheasant's wing.

He was annoyed with himself, that he, Mortimer Vandeleur, the pitiless, inflexible master of Old Court, should feel compassion for a poor starved wretch. It was incredible, unthinkable.

She pushed the plate away: "No, not meat, thanking you kindly all the same, sir, it's a fast day; but sure you know nought of fasts, only of feasts." Her voice was full of wonder, her eyes regarded him with an extraordinary expression of mingled pity and perplexity. "Sure it's a bit of white bread I'll take and a few praties, if it's pleasing to yer honour."

"Take them all," he said, handing her a richly-embossed silver entrée dish, containing delicately-browned potato chips.

She regarded them dubiously. "They are praties?" she inquired. He smiled reassuringly.

She emptied the contents of the dish into her tattered apron. "Thank you kindly, sir," she said, "and now I'll be goin'. God bless you, and may you never know thirst and hunger and cold and nakedness."

## CHAPTER II.

Mortimer Vandeleur lay back in a comfortably-padded, richly-upholstered arm chair, his dark head supported by soft cushions, his legs stretched to the warm blaze, his feet on the brass fender. A flagon of green chartreuse and a half-emptied glass were on a table beside him.

It was late, close on midnight. Yet he did not feel inclined to go to bed; he preferred to smoke a meditative pipe in the luxurious library. The library was his favourite sanctum; in it he spent most of his time indoors.

He was thinking of the old woman. Guthrie, the butler, told him that her name was Catherine Dempsey. "Faix its a widow woman she is, and lives alone in a mud hovel beyant in the mountains. Her four sons—fine boys they were entirely—and her three purty daughters went off, all of them, to America last summer."

Guthrie gave the information in his most deferential manner. His master dismissed him with a wave of the hand, and the worthy butler, safe on the other side of the door, shook his clenched fist and muttered savagely, "Bedad it was starvation drove them out of the Old Country. Faix, and its better live in a foreign land than rot here. Bad cess to you, Mortimer, it's yourself has the black heart."

Left alone, the master of Old Court fell into a profound reverie. Suddenly a gust of cold wind froze the warm air and chilled him to the bone; he shivered, looked towards the windows; they were closed; the fire burned brightly, yet he felt the icy blast penetrating to the marrow of his bones. He grew colder, colder, his pulses ceased to beat, his heart stood still,

with a short gasp, a low cry he fell forward—his soul, leaving its earthly tenement, flew forth—forth into the outer blackness, upward—upward through myriads of stars until it gained the Presence.

The brilliant light blinded it, it shrunk and shivered; an intolerable sense of its own littleness, its own blackness, overwhelming it.

"He is mine," said a terrible voice, a voice that caused the poor, trembling soul to quiver with horror.

Then another voice spoke, a sad, low, ineffably sweet voice. "Is it indeed so, Satan?" it asked, and a quick fluttering of hope stirred in Mortimer's soul.

His angel guardian bent a pitying glance upon him. Then the scales were brought, and upon the left side were heaped all his sins, his wicked deeds, his extortions, his numberless acts of pitiless cruelty, of sensual indulgence, of selfish greed. On the right there was nought—nought.

Satan laughed, and his demoniacal laughter made the unfortunate soul quake with unspeakable terror.

Realising its own weakness, its abominable deeds, despair gripped and held it. Hell opened before its affrighted vision. Satan was on the point of dragging it down—down—when the Angel of Light came forward. He placed a glass of cold water and a heap of potatoes on the right side of the scales; the scales swayed for an instant, the balance was even, then the right side rose—rose—"I was hungry and you gave Me to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me to drink"—

The seraphic voice rang forth, thrilling the black soul of Mortimer Vandeleur, and as it heard it seemed as though a gentle rain fell, cleansing and purifying. His soul was no longer black.

Suddenly something burned. "He is saved yet so as by fire," sang the angelic choir in a triumphant chant.

With a cry Mortimer awoke. A spark of wood scorched his hand. He was bathed in perspiration from head to foot, his hair was damp with it, his face was wet with tears. He looked round in a dazed way, looked at the familiar room, the smouldering logs. "It was a dream," he murmured, passing his hand across his damp forehead. He sighed. He stared in perplexity into the wood fire, then he rose, lit his bedroom candle, and slowly, mechanically as though still dreaming, he went upstairs.

The famine lasted for some months, on into the spring of 1849; but from that morning, for several miles round Old Court, there was no lack of food or raiment.

Mortimer Vandeleur gave generously, he helped wisely, finding employment for the able-bodied, relieving the helpless, turning his own stately house into a hospital for the sick and infirm.

"Sure I told them if you only knew how hungry and thirsty and naked we were, you would give us food and drink and

clothing," Catherine Dempsey told him on Christmas morning, smiling broadly from under an immaculately clean, white cap. "Sure, you didn't know, asthore, until you saw me, and I told you the truth—and no lies."

Mortimer Vandeleur smiled vaguely, courteously returning her friendly greeting; but he wondered was it the sight of the old woman's misery or his strange dream that had changed his heart.

At any rate, one thing was indisputable, his heart was changed, and the change that brought happiness and prosperity to his people gave peace to his own soul—peace which passeth all understanding—"it cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof."

## A Trinity.

Two tried companions here with me abide  
And share my bed and board;  
Neither is often absent from my side,  
My platter and my cup  
Are seasoned by the one or other hand,  
My very garments shape  
Themselves to their command.  
They sometimes lean together o'er my bed,  
Should one alone keep ward  
In dreams they seem the same.  
Already they await my rising up,  
And press to win  
Immediate notice: rarely I escape  
From both together, going out or in.  
So near, familiar, and so closely wed  
Are we within one frame,  
'Tis hard to tell  
If it be only I who therein dwell,  
Or if we three,  
Since Pain and Penance ever lodge with me.

MOTHER ST. JEROME.

## The Popes at Avignon.

IN the south-eastern corner of France, where the Rhone on its long journey from the Swiss Alps to the Mediterranean makes a curve westward and is there joined by the Durance, in the plain thus enclosed, rich in meadows, orchards, and mulberry plantations, lies the ancient city of Avignon. Founded by a Celtic tribe, the Cavares, in after years Romans, Burgundians, Ostogoths, Franks, and Saracens, Counts of Provence and Toulouse in turn ruled in it and from it; but its fame will always be that for seventy-three years, from 1305 to 1378, it was the residence of the Popes. Seven in succession, all Frenchmen, reigned over the Universal Church from the happy security of the strong walls of Avignon.

No wonder that at the beginning of the fourteenth century the Roman Pontiffs shrank from residence in the Eternal City, of which nevertheless they remained Bishops and Kings. For long time there had been no strong power in Italy. The cities had not yet developed into established Republics; the nobility were lawless and cruel; the people everywhere turbulent. For a hundred and fifty years Rome had been ever restless, frequently in revolt, sometimes a centre of anarchy. At length its people began to dream of a Republic after the example of Florence and Pisa. The shameful indignities inflicted on Boniface VIII. were fresh in the mind of Europe.

When, in 1305, the Cardinals assembled in conclave at Perugia, they were divided into two factions, one desirous of an Italian for Pope, who would be faithful to the memory of Boniface, the other of a Frenchman who would support the interests of Philip the Fair, King of France, the most powerful monarch in Europe. The issue was the election of one outside the Sacred College, Bertrand de Got, Archbishop of Bordeaux, who took the name of Clement V. Though actually a subject of the King of England as Duke of Guienne, he had been from youth a personal friend of Philip the Fair. With the decree of election the Cardinals had sent him a pressing invitation to come to Perugia, thence to proceed to Rome, but Clement ordered them to repair at once to Lyons, since he had chosen that city for his coronation. Very strange was the scene on that day, November 14th, 1305. The ceremonial was enhanced by the presence of the French Court. Two intents in the heart of the King: to defame for ever the memory of his antagonist, Boniface VIII., and to seize the possessions and revenues of the Knights Templars within his dominions. Hope of their fulfilment must have risen high as he watched his friend and former protégé crowned and enthroned in the highest place in Christendom. When the procession afterwards passed through the city an old wall crumbled beneath its weight of sight-seers and fell,

killing the Pope's brother and the aged Cardinal Orsini, who had assisted at twelve conclaves and lived under thirteen Popes. Clement himself was thrown from his horse and the most precious jewel in the Papal tiara, a carbuncle, was lost. The next day another brother of the Pope was slain in a quarrel between his servants and the retainers of the Cardinals; all which Italian historians hold to have been prophetic of disaster. For some time Clement resided in various places in France, but he saw that the head of the Church could be no guest of the French King. He would not go to Italy, he was very loath to leave his native land, and ultimately chose for residence the city of Avignon, capital of the Combat de Venaissin, a fief of the Norman Kingdom of Naples. The weight of troubles he had to face in both the political and religious world was so heavy that to escape responsibility he convoked the Fifteenth General Council of the Church. It assembled at Vienne, near Avignon, October, 1311. There the good name of Boniface VIII. was vindicated, the Templars were suppressed, not as guilty of the crimes alleged, but their suppression as a matter of expediency for the peace of the Church, and their property given to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John. Amongst many salutary decrees of this Council was one that introduced into the wars the study of the Oriental languages; the Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldean tongues were to be taught wherever the Roman Court was held and in the Universities of Paris, Oxford, Salamanca, and Bologna. Exhausted by his labours at the Council, Clement died in 1314.

The Holy See was then vacant for two years. At last James D'Euse, a native of Cahors, Cardinal of Osa, was elected John XXII. He had a long reign of eighteen years, and withal a busy and troubled one. Nothing seemed to stay the tireless energy of his mind. During his Pontificate sixty thousand documents were issued from Avignon.

He was followed by the gentle Cistercian monk, Benedict XII.

But it was under the third Avignon Pope that the ancient city rose to the height of its power and splendour. Peter Roger, born in the Castle of Maumont, near Limoges, had entered, at the age of ten, the Benedictine Monastery of La Chaise-Dieu, afterwards Abbot of Fécamp, Bishop of Arras and Chancellor of France, Archbishop of Seus, Cardinal, he finally became Pope Clement VI., May 17, 1342. His policy as head of the Church was unfortunately marred by his excessive devotion to the interests of France, and those of his relatives. Most of the twenty-five Cardinals whom he created were French; and the King of France was given permission to receive Communion under both kinds. He accepted the senatorial dignity offered him as "Knight Roger" by a deputation which included Petrarch amongst its members, and granted their request for the celebration of a jubilee every fifty instead of every hundred years, but firmly declined the invitation to return to Rome. He even assured greater per-

manency to the Papal residence abroad by purchasing the sovereignty of Avignon for 80,000 florins from Joanna, Queen of Naples and Countess of Provence. He enlarged the Cathedral, crowning the summit of the Rocher-des-Dorus, which rises 194 feet above the Rhone. He drew scholars from all parts to the University. On the southern slope of the Rocher-des-Dorus, he completed the building of the stately Palace of the Popes, an imposing fortress made up of eight towers linked one to another by massive walls, its severe architecture a noble example of the Gothic art of the South of France. The fortifications—on the land side—ran for a distance of three miles, and were flanked by thirty-nine towers. Within the city were sixty churches and many religious establishments; it was “La Ville Sonnante” of cynic Rabelais. The frescoes which adorned the interiors of the Palace and Churches were the works of artists from Sienna. Agents of the great Italian banking houses settled in the city acting as money-changers, intermediaries for the inflow and outflow of the vast revenues of the Holy See, the latter chiefly for the defence of Christendom against the ever-increasing Mahomedan peril. A crowd of traders of all kinds supplied the necessities of a numerous Court, and an unceasing coming and going of visitors. The personality of Clement VI. was itself attractive. He was munificent to profusion, a patron of arts and letters, he delighted in brilliant receptions, his banquets were well appointed. He was ever ready to protect the oppressed and to help the needy. When the great pestilence known as the “Black Death” reached Avignon his courage and charity were conspicuous; when the Jews were cruelly persecuted in every country of Europe he offered them a refuge in his little State. In a second deputation from Rome to induce the Pontifical Court to recross the Alps there appeared a Deputy, Cola di Rienzi, whose youth, brilliant eloquence and patriotism won the admiration of the Pope. Clement loaded him with gifts, and appointed him to a lucrative office at Rome. With this start he became all-powerful in the city, the populace adored him, the turbulent nobles sought his friendship, and in May, 1347, on the steps of the Capitol, he was proclaimed Liberator of Rome and Italy, and proposed to rebuild the Roman Empire on the plan of Augustus. Clement acquiesced in a movement he knew was too violent to be lasting. The “Liberator” became a tyrant, and was assassinated in riot. It was on Good Friday, in 1327, that Petrarch, prince of lyric poets, newly crowned laureate by the Roman Senate, came their envoy bearing their congratulations to Clement on his accession. From boyhood the poet had lived at Avignon, and had been educated there. It was on Good Friday, 1327, in the Church of St. Clare, that he first beheld the young and beautiful married lady, Laura de Sade, who forthwith invested and crowned with all the perfections of his ideal became for twenty-one years the inspiration of his poetry, and swayed all the current of his life and thought.

To Clement VI. succeeded Innocent VI., a native of Limousin. He was the first to prepare in earnest for return to Rome. But return meant conquest. For this he sent as his delegate to Italy Cardinal Alboros, renowned for valour in war—he had been standard-bearer to the King of Castile—and for diplomatic skill. In fifteen years the doughty Cardinal had the road ready.

It was, however, the last Pope who accomplished the project. Urban V. had been a Benedictine monk, then Abbot of the Monastery of St. Victor at Marseilles. He so loved his Order that he wore its habit during his Pontificate. In spite of the displeasure of the French King, and the remonstrances of the Cardinals threatening to desert him, he left Avignon in April, 1367, and sailing from Marseilles on May 30, after a long coasting journey reached Corneto, where he was received by the redoubtable Alboros, and by a deputation from Rome bringing him the keys of St. Angelo. On October 21 he entered Rome in triumph, accompanied by the Emperor, Charles VI. It was the first time for more than a hundred years that Pope and Emperor had appeared side by side in friendship. A year after he received, on the steps of St. Peter's, the Emperor of the East, John V. Paleologus, and absolved him from schism. But these fair promises brought little fruit. Sedition again arose; Perugia revolted; and Urban, ever pressed by the Cardinals, was meditating return to Avignon. At Montefiascone he received the memorable warning from Bridget,\* Princess of the Royal house of Sweden: if he returned to Avignon he would shortly die. He heeded not. He embarked at Corneto, September 5, 1370, in a fleet of richly-adorned galleys sent by the King of France, but the Pope, “sad, suffering, and deeply moved,” reached Avignon September 24, and died on December 19. He had taken the name of Urban, he said, because all the Popes who had borne the name had been saints. A holy ambition, just touched, not achieved. The process of his canonisation was hindered by political troubles, and he has remained “The Blessed Urban V.”

Cardinal Peter Roger, of Beaufort, nephew of Clement VI., was the last Avignon Pope. Gregory XI. saw, as Urban had seen, that there was no hope for Italy except in the restoration of the Papacy to Rome. For six years he saw no way. The Republic of Florence had sent to him, as its ambassador, to treat for peace, Catherine, daughter of Giacomo di Benincasa, the dyer of Sienna. From childhood the recipient of extraordinary Divine favours, at sixteen she had joined the Sisters of Penance of St. Dominic, and now, in her twenty-ninth year, was a power for good in suffering Italy. She strongly urged the Pope to return. Afterwards, in 1376, she wrote: “You ask my advice touching your return to Rome. In the name of Jesus Crucified, I say that you

\* This is the St. Bridget whose beautiful prayers to Our Lord in His Passion are still found in our old manuals.

should start as soon as you possibly can." He did so. On the 13th September in that year Gregory XI. looked for the last time on the fortress-palace and the beautiful city of Avignon. A fleet of twenty-two galleys, commanded by the Grand Master of the Knights of Rhodes, bore the Papal Court from Marseilles, and on January 18th, 1377, the Pope made his entry into Rome, surrounded by rejoicing multitudes, his path strewn with flowers, and the city re-echoing with the cry "Long live Gregory XI." He entered it, neither himself nor his successors ever again officially to leave it. For Rome without the Popes is but

"The lone mother of dead empires."

With them she is the Eternal City seated on the seven hills, and the "Roma Felix" resting on the tombs of the Apostles.

PLACID WAREING, C.P.

### A Mother Speaks.

Dear Mary, who didst see thy First-born Son

Go forth to die amidst the scorn of men

For whom He died,

Receive my first-born son into thy arms,

Who also hath gone forth to die for men,

And keep him by thee till I come to him.

Dear Mary, I have shared thy sorrow

And soon shall share thy joy.

P. H. PEARSE.

Kilmainham Prison, 2nd May, 1916.

## "Holy Earth."

A MODERN Catholic poet,\* in a beautiful and well-known poem, includes among the consolations of a Christian death-bed, "the hope of consecrated ground"; and this hope, in one form or another, has probably been felt by everyone who thinks about his death-bed at all.

It is true that such calm philosophers as Blessed Thomas More could reflect, without apparent emotion, that "he who has no grave is covered with the sky, and the way to heaven out of all places is equal"; but, to our loving and reverent fancy, that serene vision was given to him by God and his angel-guardian to compensate him for his own fate, and to prepare him to face it! Those who are not called to go his road sympathise more fully with the yearning at which he could smile.

Encouraged and emphasised by early Christian sentiment and the circumstances of early Christian history, this yearning for hallowed ground is itself as old as human nature.

We know how the fate of the unburied dead presented itself to ancient thought as terrible beyond naming, and how the dying heroes of the Iliad and the Æneid, fearless of everything else, prayed with their last breath against *that*.

Further, it was the wish of all pious pagans to obtain burial in a sacred precinct, or in the temple of a guardian god.

The laws of Solon and the prohibitions of the "Twelve Tables" were directed mercilessly against this; against the extravagance of funeral honours and their attendant superstitions. But natural feeling would not be frustrated; and, in one way or another, men managed to evade the law. If all else failed, a limb would be cut from the dead body before burial to be interred with stealthy honours elsewhere!

The later custom of cremation made things easier for such pagan piety. It must have been comparatively simple to retain a small urn with a few ashes among holy associations of the most intimate kind—in a mortuary chapel for instance or even by a household altar.

It was otherwise with the Christians, who were early distinguished for their adherence to the Jewish mode of burial. This, if holy associations were to be provided at all, necessitated more care and forethought in providing them. There was the old dread of ceremonial defilement and the law which forbade burial within the city bounds.

Although earth-burial had, of course, preceded cremation, among the Romans themselves, the reversion of the new sect to the older practice called down some ridicule. The Christians were gibingly told that they dared not put their faith in

\* Father Frederic Faber.

the Resurrection to the test, that they feared the difficulty of restoring a body burned to ashes!

The Apologists calmly replied that the Resurrection was, in no way, concerned:—God was able to raise both dust and ashes alike! But, for the burning of human flesh, as though in sacrifice, that appeared to them a brutal and brutalising act; and they chose, rather, to follow the mode of burial to which their Lord Himself had submitted.

Much might be said of the influence of this choice; of the impress it laid on Christian morals, tending to keep alive the thought of the dead, and giving birth to such Christian traditions as the unseemliness of contracting another marriage until the body of departed wife or husband should be dissolved into its native earth.

But even if its sole work had been the creation of "the Christian Churchyard" much would have been done to further the aims of the new Community.

The convert from any kind of conscientious paganism was bound to have a great deal in common with his old faith. Its ceremonies would be very dear to him by association; and no ceremonies so naturally and inevitably dear as those which had centred round the burial of his dead, and the preservation of their memory by the special prayers and sacrifices in the mortuary chapel, around the household urns.

If Christians had adhered to the custom of cremation it is difficult, humanly speaking, to see how they could ever have been completely emancipated from the cult of the household gods. As it was, the Church was rescued, almost without effort of her own, from just the associations most likely to lead her members back into the old errors. Her isolation became her freedom. The Church of the Catacombs, by the very circumstances of her persecuted existence, had to discard the pagan fear of the dead. Around the subterranean tombs of the martyrs, on which was spread the Feast of Life, the old dread of ceremonial defilement was not only forgotten,—it was "reduced to the absurd."

And when the clouds broke, and the Church had to part for awhile with her "fearful Hope" of martyrdom, we all know how she became more closely united in love and loyalty with those who had realised that Hope. When she emerged from the Catacombs, it was like another "harrying of hell"; for she brought her Blessed Dead with her; casting in her lot with them, unashamed, and proclaiming in the most practical manner, her belief that wherever they lay was hallowed ground.

Churches began to spring up over the tombs of the martyrs outside the city; relics were eagerly transferred to churches within the bounds; whilst to visit the tombs of the martyrs became the happiest pilgrimage for holidays. Even those daylight funerals which vexed the soul of Julian the Apostate were part and parcel of this sentiment. The triumph of the martyrs was felt to convey some vicarious triumph to all the faithful departed.

So far, however, there was no actual idea of a churchyard proper, of a common burying ground for both martyrs and the rank and file of the faithful.

It remained for the Emperor Constantine to put the old yearning into bold words. He would be buried "near the Apostles"; that is to say, in the porch of the great Church of the Apostles in Constantinople, which he had himself built, and where the body of Saint Andrew was enshrined.

There were strong reasons why the pleading of Constantine should not be denied; and wider pleadings were soon to follow it. It was in A.D. 542—in the days of Gregory the Great—that the clergy presented their great general petition for the dead, that they might lie near church walls, where the living, passing to church, might utter a prayer at their graves, and carry the thought of them into the sanctuary itself.

Very beautifully does Gregory speak of the happiness of this for the holy dead, thus placed "in the path of prayer." It was a privilege, of course, kept for those who had died in full communion with the Church; and there was a tradition that the sacred soil would reject the unabsolved dead, and the ghosts of martyrs cry out for their removal; at any rate, until the oblations had been offered for them, and there was reasonable ground for hoping that God would give them peace. For the very existence of a Christian cemetery is bound up with this idea of selection. It must be a place of light and rest; safe from the demons, who as tradition said, were bound to come to claim their own, however sacred the harbour to which the poor wrecks might have been brought. Such, in its golden days, was the churchyard proper; a common, yet a hallowed ground; wherein sanctity was the one right to precedence.

The later craving for intramural burial was long and wisely opposed by the Church, who saw its dangers for the simpler-minded; the distinction it would make between the wealthy and the humble, and the countenance it might give to such popular superstitions as that Requiem Masses were not efficacious unless said in the near neighbourhood of those for whom they were offered.

But there were great men, more grasping than Constantine, who would only build churches on condition that they, the founders, should at least, be buried in the nave; and in Norman England the chancel-vault became the freehold of the rich, who would leave special injunctions to their Chaplains that the Requiem Masses were to be sung exactly over them.

Also some of the great folk of these and later days fettered their chantries with exclusive and inconvenient provisions as to their graves. We read, for instance, that Thomas Fienes, Lord Dacre, asked to be buried in the chancel-recess intended for the *Sepulcrum Domini* or Easter Sepulchre; and these recesses seem often to have been provided by the local great family for the parish-church, on condition that they should be used as the tomb-place of the donors.

But so long as England was a Catholic country, such things

were easy to understand and forgive. The meaning of them was clear to everyone, and besides, the naive selfishness defeated its own object, for a rich man's grave meant, by the very circumstances of the case, a poor man's fuller spiritual life. It meant another Altar for the Holy Sacrifice, another centre of devotion in the parish church; another seed-plot for holy thoughts and aspirations, prayers, and almsgiving. Only after the Reformation did the practice of church-burial for anyone important or powerful enough to claim it become a source of real evil. For the Reformation divorced it from its one true meaning; and the results of the separation have been sufficiently obvious and painful ever since.

With regard to the churchyard, we may notice that the Reformation contributed, indirectly, to its degradation. For the desire to be buried inside church walls persisted, blindly, though its meaning was gone; and as the churchyard was more and more regarded as the resting-place of the less-favoured dead, it came to be associated in the popular mind with the old pagan fear of death; and the graveyard was avoided as a place of ill-omen.\*

Tales of its vampires, its corpse-candles, and unquiet spirits grew apace; and as there was a peculiarly unpleasant superstition to the effect that the man *most recently buried* never rested in his grave, every churchyard was sure of a succession of ghosts!

How strong was the impression of the churchyard's uncanniness, and how shadowy and unreal the sense of its sacred character, is sufficiently shown by such writers as the English Harrison Ainsworth and the Irish Sheridan Le Fanu, who lay their principal scenes of horror, as by choice, in a churchyard, or a vault, and connect the sinister events of their romances

As an antidote to all this, the churchyard was naturally secularised as much as possible, and resorted to for sport or business. Pious Anglican Prelates, such as Bishop Ken, might hark-back to Catholic tradition, and choose their graves "near church walls where the sacred crumbs might fall from God's table"; and moralists, such as Addison and Gray, might sincerely express, in prose or verse, their reverence for churchyard earth; but in the heart of the Protestant peasant the churchyard never regained its old place. With increasing education, he has, of course, learnt to ignore its terrors, and he often honours particular corners which contain his household graves; but as an integral part of the scheme of Religion it has ceased to exist for him. The very laws made for its protection by well-meaning Committees are an evidence of this.

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\* It will be remembered that such pagan fears are never very far from the simple mind; and that only the counterforce of holy associations can be made to refute them. Shakespeare himself seems to have had a touch of them. His King John, trying to break to Hubert his murderous design against Arthur, regrets that they are not in a churchyard, where the surroundings would suit the words!

Yet the final passing of the churchyard as a place of burial, under the modern Burial Acts, is sometimes quoted by sincere and pious Protestants as a proof of the decay of Christian tradition, and has even driven some into a half-hearted advocacy of the custom denounced by the Early Christians as brutal and brutalising, on the grounds that the objections brought against a churchyard of confined dead could not be reasonably brought against a churchyard of funeral urns!

With all due sympathy for this feeling, Catholics may give thanks that they are not tempted to it. It lost whatever hold it had upon them long ago, when, as the persecuted "recusants" and "dissenters," they learnt the true meaning of holy earth and Christian burial; learnt, gentle and simple, rich and poor alike, that these things depend as little on the right to lie in a parish churchyard as on the ability to purchase a chancel-vault or erect an altar-tomb. Long accustomed—and, as it were, compelled—to regard both churchyard and church-burial as temporary symbols of an Eternal Hope, they have echoed the words of St. Monica. There can be no "exile's grave" for the Faithful, whose names are remembered "when the Tremendous Prayers are offered at the Altar!" The walls of *that* Eternal City comprehend, and hallow all.

So wherever the Catholic lays his dead, and however far from the place of burial, he must offer the availing Sacrifice for them, he is not influenced by those pious fears which are but materialism in disguise.

And although as conscious as were the early apologists of the power of God to raise both dust and ashes alike, he will not lightly forfeit the privilege of being "buried like his Lord."

G. M. HORT.

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#### PASSIONIST MISSIONS AND RETREATS.

Nazareth House, Belfast; Nazareth House, Bexhill-on-Sea; Little Sisters of the Poor, Preston; Carrickfergus; Our Lady's Convent, Southam; Ligoniel; Nazareth Lodge, Belfast; Marist Brothers, Dumfries; Inmates of Little Sisters of the Poor Convent, Birmingham.

# Retribution.

By GREGORY BARR.

## CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)

### A RIFT IN THE CLOUDS.

It was the fifteenth of August. The hot sun shone brightly on the little village of Ivraie. The sunbeams kissed the iridescent waves, which murmured their thanks in ripples of liquid laughter. The sleek cows sought the shelter of overhanging rock or wide-spreading tree. The drone of insects on the wing mingled with the hum of bees, and all nature chanted, "Rejoice and be glad; it is good to live."

"Yes, Lucille, it is good to live," said Victor, lifting his hat and looking up at the blue sky, flecked with a tiny fringe of white. "It is only when one's foot has touched the borderland of life and death that one can realise how good it is to inhale the fresh sea breeze, to stand free and unfettered under the blue vault of heaven and to live."

Lucille shuddered at the memory of the past and pressed closer to him. They were both standing outside the little chapel where they had knelt side by side to receive the Bread of Life in order to gain God's blessing on the great act this day to be accomplished. Indeed, had Lucille followed her own private wishes she and Victor would have been quietly married after the early Mass, but she could not disappoint the village children, who looked forward to making a great day of the event: "Certes—their own Miss Luce was to be married, and wouldn't she let them walk in white and strew flowers on her path?" Then garlands were hung, and the little smacks in the bay were gay with colour—all of which was repellent to Lucille's inward feeling. Her loved one had been but snatched from the verge of eternity—the shadow of which seemed even yet to cling to him. But standing in the sunshine this glorious morning, the brightness of the day seemed to enter into her soul, and joyfully she responded: "Yes, Victor; it is good to live."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### WEDDING BELLS.

There were but few guests at the wedding; Lucille wished it to be as quiet as possible. The good curé, M. Blenmin, the notary from Saint Malo, M. Delormes' life-long friend; Ita Blenmin, the only bridesmaid, and Mme. Bunsen—these

and no more graced the wedding banquet. A grand feast was spread for the villagers beneath the trees, and the village children had cakes, fruit and games sufficient to make them supremely happy.

M. Blenmin acted in an extraordinary manner both before the marriage and during the déjeuner. He had two mysterious parcels, and whenever he looked at them he laughed, occasionally giving them a kind of hug—all of which was totally opposed to the usual staid propriety of his movements.

At last M. Delormes said:

"What is the matter, man? You look as if you had a talisman there which you are afraid we should steal."

"My secret to myself," laughed M. Blenmin. "When we have drunk the health of the bride and bridegroom in your best champagne I shall reveal it."

Curiosity was aroused, and the healths were quickly proposed and responded to. Then M. Blenmin rose and handed a beautiful morocco leather case to Lucille, whose monogram was gilt on the cover. To Victor he handed what looked like a scroll wrapped in soft leather, on which was engraven "M. Victor Beauchamp, from one who asks to be called a friend."

"Open yours first, Lucille," said M. Blenmin. As she did so their eyes were almost dazzled by the flash of diamonds—a ring, a brooch, and a bracelet of diamonds of the first water were the contents of the parcel. A tiny note was in the case containing the same words as those on Victor's scroll.

"Now, Victor, yours."

Victor unfolded a long roll of parchment heavily sealed: he looked at it in a dazed manner.

"What does it mean?" he asked. "This is some mistake."

"Can't you read, my lad?" asked M. Blenmin.

"No; not this. I cannot understand it." And he threw it on the table.

"It is neither more nor less than the title-deed of the estate of your forefathers, on which stands the ruins of Beauchamp Castle. All now belongs to you and your heirs forever."

Silence fell on the little group. M. Delormes was the first to speak.

"Who is the donor?" he asked, instinctively divining what the answer would be.

M. Blenmin took a small card from his notebook and handed it to Victor, who flushed. A pained look crossed his face, and he passed the card silently round the table. On the card was written: "From a broken-hearted father in reparation of the sin of his only son."

A violent mental struggle wrote its message legibly on Victor's countenance. Lucille stole her hand gently into his.

"My son, you must satisfy the unfortunate father by accepting his gift," said the curé gently.

"Yes; that is just it," added the notary. "When your noble letter to M. Legrange reached him he cried out, 'Would

that I had such a son!" He longed to see you, but did not feel able just yet for the interview. He only asks one favour from you, and that is that you will go to him when he sends for you. Meanwhile he has placed in my hands a sufficient sum of money to restore the old chateau if you wish, or to build a modern residence on the estate if you prefer not to touch the ancient ruin. Listen further"—as Victor was about to interrupt. "M. Legrange is retiring from business and from public life. He is crushed with sorrow and the disgrace attending the revelations of his infamous son. The sands of his life are almost run out. One small consolation—and one only remains to him—to make you this reparation, the only reparation in his power for the injuries done to you by the wretch who called him father. Will you refuse this one drop of comfort to sweeten his bitter draught?"

Silence reigned for a while. Then the curé asked:

"Can Victor dispose of this money in any manner he pleases?"

"Certainly; provided a residence be built for him on the estate of his ancestors."

"Then, my son, I will only remind you of the awful toll demanded by the waves in their furious moods—of the widows and orphans left desolate when the bread-winners lie buried in their watery graves."

"It is enough," said Victor rising. "Be it yours and mine, Lucille, to succour the needy and the fatherless with the money provided by M. Legrange. Who knows but that God may visit in His mercy the father who suffers for the sin of his son!"

Six months later M. Camille Legrange was at rest. He had been attended by Victor and Lucille during the two months preceding his death. From the time he had heard the awful news of his son's shameful crimes and terrible death, partial paralysis set in. He removed to a small house situated some distance from Paris, and there Victor found him alone and unfriended. When Lucille heard this she promptly volunteered to come and nurse him, which offer was gratefully accepted. The lower part of his body was paralysed, whilst the use of his speech and his mental faculties were quite clear. He liked Victor to sit by his bed and to chat with him. One day he said:

"I cannot understand the cause of the great difference between you and my wretched son. He got even a better education than you did, for I had him at the Lycée, which you never attended. Can you account for the want of moral rectitude and manliness in him?"

"I can, monsieur," replied Victor, quietly.

"You can. Then, in the fiend's name, what was it?" asked the old man, fiercely, grasping the arms of his chair.

Victor was silent.

"Answer me!" snapped the other.

"In God's name, I will answer you, monsieur—for the want was GOD!"

"Bah! Idiocy!—imbecility!" And the old man angrily pointed to the door.

The young couple did not lose heart, and tended him with loving assiduity.

A week later Lucille was reading in the room where M. Legrange lay, sleeping quietly. He awoke and called her.

"What book are you reading?"

"'Le Génie du Christianisme,' by Chateaubriand."

"Humph! Rubbish, of course; but his style is good. Read me a few pages."

She did so, and he seemed to like it. The next day she asked timidly would she continue the reading. A curt "You may" was the only reply. Some days later he said: "Why, the rascal seems really to believe in Christianity! Yet he had brains!" A discussion followed in which he was surprised to find that the fair disputant also had brains. He seemed to be in such an amiable mood that she ventured to ask him to allow her to read one of the gospels for him.

"Well, it will be a novelty." When it was ended he said: "How beautiful it would be were it true! But I don't believe a word of it." He was silent for a time, then he suddenly said: "Yet, stay, I can test the truth of it. An old friend of mine, Rabbi Ben Levi, gave me some of their sacred books which he and his fellow-Jews treasure so highly. If I find that his books contain the prophecies which that gospel avers that Christ fulfilled, then I will believe in Christ."

Finding that the prophecies in the Rabbi's book tallied exactly with those mentioned in the gospel, M. Legrange believed, made his peace with God, and expired calmly in Victor's arms.

Lucille has, however, one sorrow: her father is still an unbeliever, though he no longer scoffs openly at religion. This concession he makes on account of her three lovely children, whom he worships. He has retired from business, endowing largely the orphanage founded by Victor and Lucille for the orphans of the poor fishermen lost at sea. He lives with his daughter and her husband in the neat chalet they have built at a little distance from the old chateau.

The children never weary of listening to the story of their father's wonderful escape from the eruption of St. Pierre (which is told them minus the fact that he was a prisoner). Tiny three-year-old Lucy sits on her grandfather's knee to hear the oft-repeated tale, and when he winds up with, "See what a lucky chance saved him," she asks:

"Ga-and-pa, wasn't it *Dod* saved him?" he answers:

"Perhaps so, little one."

Lucille hears, smiles, and says softly: "One day, please God, he will leave out the 'perhaps.'"

[THE END.]

## Thomas MacDonagh's Last Book.

THE tragic and untimely end of its gifted author lends an adventitious and poignantly sad interest to this volume, published almost on the morrow of his death. But the book can afford to be appraised on its merits; and the discerning reader will not fail to see, and to mourn, that it was a ripe scholar and a keen and discriminating critic whose career was cut short in its prime when Thomas MacDonagh fell riddled by English bullets in Kilmainham Goal at dawn on Holy Cross Day in May. Here is an eminently original piece of critical work, an attempt to do something that needed doing and had not been done before, an attempt "to find standards for criticism in Irish and Anglo-Irish literature, more especially in Anglo-Irish poetry." With nothing to fall back upon, with no critical apparatus but his own varied and thorough knowledge of the materials with which he deals, the author's task was no light one, and his searching analysis of his subject shows all the more admirably the sure and easy hand of the master. In the course of the series of Studies of which the book is composed the wide and deep acquaintance which is shown not only with Irish literature but with the literature of England, France and other countries, will be a revelation to any who still think that the last desperate cast for freedom must needs come—in Ireland—from hare-brained enthusiasts. And many who feel little interest in Irish or Anglo-Irish verse or prose will be drawn to read this book for its width of scholarship and its quiet grace of style.

But the subject of the book has an interest all its own. Much has been heard since Matthew Arnold's time, especially in more recent years—and not only in Ireland—of the Celtic Note in literature. What this Note was everyone had apparently some notion, though few would have cared to attempt an explanation. The term was used lightly, vaguely, often meaninglessly. Mr. MacDonagh puts it boldly aside for the less vague and more logical term, the "Irish Mode," whose characteristics he discusses and analyses with much detail and a great wealth of example in several brilliant chapters of his book. The better to show his meaning and justify his exposition he gives by way of appendix a selection of more than thirty poems of various authors which are unmistakably in this Mode. The result is to shorten considerably the list of writers in English whose work may be considered so

characteristically Irish as to fall into the class of Anglo-Irish literature, but at the same time to leave with the reader a clearer apprehension of the peculiar qualities which entitle it to that distinction.

The growth of the new literary medium may be traced to the new birth of nationalism in the brief life of the independent Parliament, and its subsequent development. Failing the native Gaelic, for a time fallen into decadence, "the alien language was stirred to expression on the lips of the native people." The new spirit needed a new speech, the new wine new bottles. "The language that had been brought to perfection for English use, and then worn by that use, that had had the fixing of the printing press and had set the printer's word above the spoken: that language, in order to serve the different purpose of the new people, had to go back to the forge of the living speech." And therein it found a new youth, flexibility and strength and power. "In spite of the self-consciousness of the age, in spite of world influences felt here, in spite of all our criticism, the Irish poets and writers (those that are truly Anglo-Irish) are beginning it all over again in the alien tongue that they know now as a mother tongue. They delight not in the ink-born terms of the English literary succession, but in the rich living language of a people, little affected by book-lore, a people standing but a little way on the English side of the crossways, remembering something of the syntax or the metaphor of Gaelic, much of the rhythm, inventing mostly for itself its metaphor from the things of life, things known at first hand."

Of this new literature still in its infancy Mr. MacDonagh has high hopes from the new stirring of the national consciousness by the Gaelic Renaissance. But just as high are the hopes which he expresses, at the close of his long chapter on Irish literature, for the future of a literature in the native language. For it already has in Arnold's phrase "the note of the new literature—a note of pride, self-reliance, almost of arrogance." "The Gaelic revival has given to some of us a new arrogance. I am a Gael and I know no cause but of pride in that. My race has survived the wiles of the foreigner here. It has refused to yield even to defeat and emerges strong to-day, full of hope and of love, with new strength in its arms to work its new destiny, with a new song on its lips and the word of the new language, which is the ancient language still calling from age to age. . . . Of a tide of thought, drawn by the inspiration of an ancient cause there is no ebb. This will have a voice, a literature to-morrow, the voice of a people new to such a way of speech, the literature of a fresh people. . . . We have begun to produce a literature in English, a foreign tongue. This will not injure or delay the progress of Gaelic literature, which must be the work of other writers. . . . Whether our people go forward in Anglo-Irish literature or not, some of our poets and writers of the next generation will certainly continue the production of a new literature in Irish. . . . We are the children of a

race, that through need or choice, turned from Irish to English. We have now so well mastered this language of our adoption that we use it with a freshness and power that the English of these days rarely have. But now we have begun to turn back to the old language, not old to us. The future poets of the country will probably be the sons and daughters of a generation that learned Irish as a strange tongue; the words and phrases of Irish will have a new wonder for them; the figures of speech will have all their first poetry. . . . The metaphors of Irish will not be colourless to the fresh eyes of the next generation, though the language be their native idiom. Perhaps the temporary abandonment of Irish has not been an unmitigated disaster, now that its revival is assured."

Pity, and strangest of coincidences, that so many young and highly-gifted men who were vital forces in the production of these twin literatures must pay with their lives for the loftiness of their ideals. Not least among them was Thomas MacDonagh. He was a true poet, and of the Irish Mode of which he has written so well. But he was more than a poet. Much of this book was written long before the Insurrection—some of it even before the outbreak of the European war. Yet one or two sentences in it show that other interests besides poetry and English literature held an abiding place in his mind. They have a strange pathos now. On one of the earlier pages he tells us that "Many strong workers in the national movements are good poets too: no Irish poet or dreamer knows the day when he may be called into action in the ancient fight." And again, a hundred pages later: "It is well for us that our workers are poets and our poets workers. 'The more a man gives his life to poetry,' says Francis Thompson, 'the less poetry he writes.' And it is well too that here still that cause which is identified, without underthought of commerce, with the cause of God and Right and Freedom, the cause which has been the great theme of our poetry, may any day call the poets to give their lives in the old service." The call came, and the answer given may not seem in the eyes of a clearer-visioned posterity the least noble or least fruitful of their works. F. S.

(Continued from page 96.)

Surely the love that can withstand such continued outrage will uphold us in our hour of stress. We are confident that the "waters" of our ingratitude cannot "quench it, nor the floods" of our sins "drown it; that it is stronger than death," for it has survived death. In this, His month of June, we should seek the consolation of His Loving Heart, and laying our troubles before Him, beg for strength to climb the thorny path to our reward in the Eternal Kingdom.

ADA O'NEILL.

"In Thanksgiving" held over till next month for lack of space.



## A Literary Circle for Young Readers of "The Cross."

Conducted by FRANCIS.

### RULES OF THE GUILD.

- I. The Guild of Blessed Gabriel is a literary circle open to boys and girls under 18 years of age.
- II. The members will be expected to spread devotion to Blessed Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, by practising the virtues of purity, charity and truth; and by living lives worthy of him who is to be their model and guide.
- III. They will at all times observe the conditions under which the competitions will be held.
- IV. They will endeavour to bring as many new members as they can into the Guild of Blessed Gabriel.

MY confession last month that my correspondence was a diminished quantity seems to have touched the hearts of old friends and new. Nobly has the call for letters been responded to, and never were letters more welcome. I find that my children, too, have sorrowed, some of them, as their letters show, very deeply, in our country's recent dark hour of affliction. I only wish I could print some of their letters in full. Here is a short extract from Lillian M. Nally's:—"Poor Ireland has passed through very sad days and I find it very hard to write when I think of those that have gone—the fairest blossoms of our nation, the noblest and bravest hearts in all the world, whose only crime was to love their country well:

'To wish it Union and to wish it free;  
For this they died, for this they nobly fell;  
True to themselves, O Ireland, and to thee.'

Proinsias Mac Tighearnain admits that he forgot to write last month, but rightly supposes that "the sad series of events . . ." would be "sufficient apology." He says in another part of his letter:—"Like all Irish 'rebellions,' it was gloriously sad—like the smile of a dying man. It was so spiritual—so clean. All who took part in it were 'true men'—nay, they were saints. One, at least—the boy-captain who was shot by sentence of courtmartial at Kilmainham—deserves such a title." Yes, a Proinsias, that is, thank God, one thing of which we may justly feel proud. Whoever may differ from these men in the opinions which they held, it is freely admitted at home and abroad that their lives were pure and unsullied, and their motives noble and unselfish, and now that these facts have been brought into prominence, the influence of those lives cannot fail to have an ennobling effect on future generations of our countrymen. The good we do is not always "interred with our bones." Chrissie Burke also writes on "the all-absorbing topic—the fate of our poor country and her brave sons who have fought and bled and died for Ireland. "Let us hope," she says, "their

heroic struggle has not been in vain, that Ireland will soon be freed from the chains of captivity which long have bound her." Yet it is sad to think of those that have gone beyond recall, though we cannot regret the manner of their death. We seem to be on the threshold of a new and brighter era in Erin's sad history. Out of the graves of her dead, hope, long foreign to our dear country, springs up to allay our sorrow. Should that hope be realised, the day we have all longed and prayed for will have come—the day when there will be a peaceful, happy and united Ireland." May God grant that the hope will be realised, Chrissie. I must ask all members of Blessed Gabriel's Guild to pray very hard for that intention. Our country has, indeed, been heavily tried, but "whom God loveth He chasteneth," and

Her hath He robed in sorrow and crowned with a martyr crown.

And set her, a thing of mocking, the sight of all men before,

That from her high cross of anguish she one day be lifted down.

And the stone from her tomb of darkness be rolled back for ever more.

And hers who hath borne the burden, and walked in the furnace flame.

Who hath tasted the bitter ashes and drank of the cup of gall,

Are the Faith that most trace retaineth of the Heaven whence first it came,

And the Hope that Despair outliveth, and the Love that forgiveth all.

Thanks to all my dear children for their very kindly letters. **Mary Rennie's**

was another which pleased me. She tells me that the

**MY POST BAG.** devotion to our dear patron, Blessed Gabriel, is steadily

progressing at her school, and she hopes to bring us

members before long. I shall not fail to pray for your intention, Mary, and

am grateful for your promise to remember me in turn. Prayers are also

asked by **Eily Barrett** (who is under examination in Junior Grade as I write),

**May Allen, Mary E. Doyle, Bridie Redmond, and Eileen Macinerney,** and I

would ask all my children to join me in praying for their intentions. **Margaret**

**Ryan** writes an appreciative note and regrets the loss of three very clever

members. But it does not look as if we had lost them, does it now, Margaret?

I am relying on their friendship to cheer us with kindly messages for many a

year to come. **Eily Barrett** laments that Lilian M. Nally did not hearken to

me. Wrong, for once, Eily! Harken, you, to Lilian: "Will you please

tell Eily Barrett how happy her message has made me and what a joy it is

to know that so sweet a little girl sometimes thinks of me in the sunny South.

Eily is like a smile of God; she brings happiness and sunshine into our Guild.

Let me say to her in the words of a dear and much-loved poet:

'God bless you, a chara, God bless you,

And keep you from grief and pain;

May the breezes of heaven caress you

And the sun and the kindly rain.

'May the road that is out before you

Be pleasant and smooth and white;

May never a cloud hang o'er you,

Is the prayer that I pray to-night.' "

Such a number of new members as have come in this month. It is really delightful to welcome the crowd. **Aine Nic Raghnaill** introduced five, some of whom sent on their applications in time to be received last month, but acknowledged her introduction, namely, **Kathleen** and **Eileen McInerney, Mehil O'Conchobhair, Winnie Brophy, and Violet Cunningham.** Aine has made the resolution not to send in her name in English again, and we are requested to forget that the "Annie Reynolds" we knew ever existed (as if we could). Molaim thu, a chailin; that's the spirit of a true Irishwoman. But I hope you will aim at writing more than your name—a whole long letter, in fact—in Irish—all in good time, of course. **Kathleen McInerney and Violet Cunningham** have written this month and we are very pleased to enrol them. And now for a humiliating confession. Whether the postman, or the printer, or myself, or all of us, were in fault, I fear that a very welcome new member, **Lizzie Malone,** who hails from Howth, has been overlooked in our last two numbers. What can I say in extenuation? But I think from Lizzie's letter that she is a dear little soul who will not be hard on us, and that I shall have the pleasure of hearing from her regularly from this on. **Marie Antoinette Dunne** writes to introduce her sister **Josephine,** and the latter writes applying for admission. Welcome, Josephine; we hope to hear from you often. We have also to welcome a new friend from Belfast in the person of **Kathleen Hardy,** who has been longing to join, and a number of cailini from Drogheda,

*GUILD OF BLESSED GABRIEL*  
viz., **Lillie Moonan, L. Whitehead, Ada O'Neill, Kitty Boylan, May Carroll, Nancy Dolan, and N. Concepta McQuillan.** I wonder if Proinsias is beginning to fear that he is all alone and that something untoward has happened to the rest of my boys—deportation, or something of that kind. They certainly do not seem to be as diligent as the girls, as far as the Guild is concerned, but we must remember that it is a time of preparation for exams., and that they may not have leisure. They will, I am sure, make amends later. And there are some notable exceptions. A couple of very promising recruits have just turned up, one bearing a name already pleasantly associated for us with "Cathair ghil bhreagh Chorcaighe," viz., **John Joyce,** of St. Luke's, Cork, and **Michael Joseph Kennedy,** of Kilmainham, in our own city. Both have competed this month, and judging from their efforts we may expect to receive some fine contributions from these members in the course of the next couple of years. Michael Joseph Kennedy only saw **THE CROSS** for the first time some days ago in a shop window, but on perusal of the journal, he says, his "heart went out to it at once, and in a special way to the Guild of Blessed Gabriel." John Joyce lost his father in March last and asks the prayers of the members for the repose of his soul. A great number of the essays received bear date the 14th of June, or May, as the case may be. Some few were really excellent except for a little slipshod phrasing that was too evidently caused by haste. May I ask members to start in time and give their work a fair chance. I feel sure they will be better pleased themselves with their own efforts if they observe this rule. Especially for the next month would I ask them to make a brave effort; examinations will for the most part be over and for many the holidays will have commenced, and I hope the entries for our competitions will not be the less on that account.

Holidays! What delight is in the very word. What joy we feel in the first day or two of freedom and the dear home life. And what a long, glorious time seems to stretch before us before school opens for the autumn term. Such possibilities of happiness, of sunny days spent in the fields, or by the river, or the seashore, or in clambering up the mountain side. And then the calm, beautiful evenings in our own homes, with loving friends to join in pleasant intercourse, and leisure in which to indulge in our favourite pastime or study. How glad I am to think that my children, or most of them, are soon to experience those joys. And I feel confident that they will remember poor Francis in the freedom of the coming weeks and sometimes say a prayer for him, and I hope each one of them will send him a letter to bring him a ray of sunshine that he prays will always brighten their own lives—"the light that never shone on sea or land," to use a favourite quotation of a dear friend of mine.

The pretty Badge, bearing the portrait of Blessed Gabriel, which is awarded to the member who brings five new members into the Guild, goes this month to **Aine Nic Raghnaill, 6 Charlotte-street, Dublin.**

All newcomers will please write a personal note to Francis, apart from their competition papers, asking to be admitted to membership of the Guild.

#### Important.

In the Senior Competition there was a very large entry, and some of the essays were very good, while all were praiseworthy.

#### The Awards.

I had a difficult task in picking out the best among so many, but was obliged to award the prize to a newcomer, **Ada O'Neill,** of 24 William-street, Drogheda, whose fine essay was written in a beautiful, clear hand and very neatly finished. Special mention must be made of the following, whose work is very creditable:—**Mary Rennie, Nancy Dolan, Michael Joseph Donnelly, Freda Bottomley, May Carroll, Margaret Ryan, Lillie Moonan, John Joyce, Eily Barrett, Lil Sionoid, Aine Nic Raghnaill, Bridie Connors, Kitty Boylan, Eileen McInerney, L. Whitehead, Lizzie V. Malone, Lily O'Toole, S. Murphy, and Mairin Ni Chonchobhair.**

In the Junior Competition, too, the entry was fairly good, and the prize has been awarded to **Marie Antoinette Dunne,** of 5 St. Andrew-street, Dublin. I have also received a beautiful drawing of a crocus from a dear little girl named **N. Concepta McQuillan,** who writes from the Presentation Convent, Drogheda, which has pleased me so much that I have decided to award her a special prize. I hope to hear from this little new friend, who is only 6½ years old, very often in the years to come. The work of **May Sayers, Lizzie Gibbons, Annie Reilly, Molly Ryan, Seumas O'Sionoid, and Mehil O'Conchobhair** is specially commended.

Sometimes thinking over the letters I receive from my little correspondents

### The New Competitions.

I find myself wondering how some of them spend their leisure time during holidays, and how many of them have what is called a "hobby," apart, that is, from the pursuit of literature, or reading and writing for pleasure and profit to themselves. I think there is scarcely anyone who has not a hobby of some kind. An occupation such as gardening, for instance, would appeal to many, or the keeping of rabbits, or dogs, or poultry, or bees. Numbers of boys, I know, are fascinated by the study of mechanics, while girls, on the other hand, find a congenial subject in needlework or cookery, or both. I have been trying to find a subject for an essay that will satisfy all and give boys and girls an equal chance, and now I hope I have found one that will give members a pleasant task and bring me piles of entries.

### OUR NEXT COMPETITION.

#### I. For Members over 12 and under 18 years of age.

A handsome Book prize will be awarded for the best essay on "My Hobby, and why it appeals to me." I shall be greatly disappointed if the boys don't rise to the occasion and send me a big budget of entries next month.

#### II. For Members under 12 years of age.

A handsome Book prize will be awarded for the best letter on "My Favourite Hymn, and why I love it." This also ought to bring me a great number of letters.

All intending competitors will please remember the following rules: All competition papers must be certified by some responsible person as being the unaided work of the competitors. They must have attached to them the coupon which will be found in this issue (one coupon will be sufficient for all the members of a family), and must be written on **one side only** of the paper. They must be sent so as to reach the office not later than July 14th. All letters to be addressed:—FRANCIS, c/o "THE CROSS," St. Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus, Dublin.

### PRIZE ESSAY.

#### THE LOVE OF THE SACRED HEART.

"O Sacred Heart! on earth our only Treasure;  
Of Love Divine Thou art the human throne;  
O Heart, Whose love no limit hath nor measure,  
Be Thou for us on earth our only Home."

These tender words are the mainstay of the toil-worn traveller on life's hard journey; inasmuch as they recall the never-failing love of the Sacred Heart. Our puny intellects cannot fathom "the breadth and length, and height, and depth" of that love. Some timid souls dare not throw themselves on His mercy. Like the prodigal son of old, they think themselves unworthy of admittance to their Father's House.

But why should any of us doubt the reception and tarry at the portals of this Loving Heart? Was not Our Saviour's mission on earth a labour of love, softening the hearts of the obdurate, and as the shepherd gathers the lost sheep into the fold, so did He freely forgive the wandering sinner and guide him to a haven of rest in His Sacred Heart?

He meekly bore the ridicule heaped on Him in His hour of agony, and on the Cross atoned a thousand-fold for our sins, solely to show us the extent of His love, and to kindle a kindred feeling in our tepid hearts. His lifelong cry was: "My child, give Me thy heart." And even in parting from us He needs must leave some proof of that mighty love. So He gave us Himself.

In the many tabernacles, Jesus, our loving Father, is watching over us, and is ever in our midst. But alas! the pathetic voice seems to say: "I am looking for one to grieve together with Me, but I can find none." The Prisoner of Love on our altars is coldly neglected, not only through the night, but throughout the long day. There are many who heedlessly pass the dwelling-place of the Lord of all Glory, and never dream of paying a visit and giving Him a few minutes' homage. But what one of them would treat a visitor with such discourtesy? Men's eyes are dazzled by the glare of worldly matters, and they worship at the shrine of the god of Mammon. In theory their religion may be all-important, but in practice they neglect it because of their business.

(Concluded on page 92.)